the Thal plant of Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Limited (RCF) suffered a loss of Rs. 24.35 crores (provisional) during 1986-87.

(b) The loss was mainly because the plant could not achieve the desired level of capacity utilisation on a sustained basis due to equipment problems, accumulation of stocks of fertilizers on account of unfavourable weather conditions and price discounts offered by RCF to clear the stocks. The company is taking steps for repair/replacement of equipment to improve capacity utilisation and achieve efficiency in consumption levels. To facilitate clearance of accumulated stocks, it has been decided not to import urea and DAP in the first half of 1987-88; imports during the second half will be restricted to meeting unavoidable international commitments. Also imported stocks will not be released for distribution so long as adequate indigenous stocks are available as far as possible.

Fair price shops and branch or Super Bazar in the Vasant Vihar

2240. SHRI KALPNATH RAI: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any final decision has been taken in the matter of opening of Fair Price Shops and branch of Super Bazar in the Government colony, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) by when the decision is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) No decision has been taken to open a fair price shop or a branch of Super Bazar in Government Colony, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi.

(b) and (c) Question do not arise.

Eligibility for crop insurance scheme

2241. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the minimum acre of land that a farmer should hold to become eligible for Crop Insurance Scheme;

(b) whether farmers holding five acres of land or less are also eligible for Crop Insurance Scheme;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps Government are taking to cover such farmers of the country under the Scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) There is no eligibility criterion as to the size of land holding for participating in the Crop Insurance. All farmers availing of crop loans from Cooperative Credit Institutions, Commercial Banks and Regional Rural Banks for raising crops of wheat, paddy, millets, oilseeds and pulses in the 'defined area(s) are covered under the Scheme.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Farmers having holding of 5 acres or less are already covered under the Scheme.

Allotment of Plots to successful Bidders in Nehru Pace, New Delhi

2242. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether stay granted by courts on the matter of allotment of plots to successful bidders in Nehru Place, New Delhi who purchased the plots in an auction in April, 1986 has since been vacated and possession of plots given to bidders; if so, what are the details thereof;

(b) if not, what are the steps Government have taken to have the stay vacated;

(c) the amount of money deposited by each of the successful bidders; and

(d) whether Government propose to allot alternative plots in South Delhi near Nehru Place to the successful bidders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) No plot has been auctioned in Nehru Place in April, 86.

(b) to (d) Question do not arise.

Output of Mini Steel Sector

2243. SHRI SHANKER SINH VAGHELA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Alloy Steel Producers' Association and Steel Furnace Association of India had been representing since the beginning of 1985, and suggesting specific steps to be taken for augmenting output of the mini-steel sector and if so, what steps have been taken by Government as suggested by the said Association; and

(b) whether Government have under consideration any long term plans for the growth and development of the electric furnace industry which produces nearly thirty per cent of the country's steel and, if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) Representations from Steel Furnace Association of India and Alloy Steel Producers Association have been received for concessions in customs duty on input raw materials used by them.

Government have taken steps to improve scrap availability to mini steel plants by increasing imports and have reduced level of customs duty on imported scrap.

(b) The Government is considering various measures for the modernisation and development of the electric arc furnace industry.

Excess Production of Fertilizers

2244. SHRI SHANKER SINH VAGHELA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that production in different fertilizer plants in the country has gone very high recently and some of the units are facing problems in regard to disposal of fertilizers etc.;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) the manner in which Government propose to dispose of excess Fertilizers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FERTILIZERS IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. PRABHU): (a) and (b) The total production of nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilizers (in terms of nutrients) in the country during 1986-87 was 54.10 lakh tonnes and 16.60 lakh tonnes, respectively as against 43.28 and 14.28 lakh tonnes during the previous year. There has been reduction in offtake due to unfavourable weather conditions in many parts of the country. The stocks of indigenously produced fertilizers (in terms of nutrients) were 25.02 and 14.71 lakh tonnes on 31-3-1987 and 31-3-1986, respectively.

(c) It has been decided not to import any urea and DAP (Di-ammonium Phosphate) during the period April to September 1987, imports during the Second half of 1987-88 will be restricted to unavoidable international commitments. However, imported Stocks would not be released for distribution, so long as adequate indigenous stocks are available, as far as possible.

Public Distribution System

2245. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state what special measures Government propose to take to make the public distribution system in the country more effective during the current financial year?